

The Times-Dispatch

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1904.

Good Cheer for Baltimore.

It is a relief to know that the fire which raged in Baltimore for more than thirty hours is at last under control. From all accounts it was the fiercest fire ever seen in this country. It was bravely and industriously fought by the entire fire department of the city, assisted by expert firemen from New York, Philadelphia and towns in the vicinity of Baltimore.

The best apparatus was in use, and every modern device known to science was employed to check the flames, but the fire raged until there was nothing more for it to feed upon. Never before in the history of the United States were so many buildings of the same character destroyed, for there has been no such fire in the heart of a large city since the advent of the modern fire-proof "skyscraper."

It makes one positively ill to read the account of the holocaust—splendid million-dollar structures consumed in a moment, as though houses of cards, by the angry flames! It is all well enough to say that the losses will be paid in great part by the insurance companies, and that much of this money will come from abroad. The fact is that property valued at many millions has been destroyed and the country is not so much the poorer. Our real wealth is not in money, but in what we call property—in buildings and railroads and the products generally of labor. Somebody must pay the loss, and somebody must suffer. The money which might have been employed in creating new property must now be employed in repaying that which was, but which has been wiped out of existence.

Again, the bright and wealthy men of Baltimore have done much to promote enterprises in various parts of the South. They have aided in building steam roads and electric roads and manufacturing industries and in establishing financial institutions. Now some of them will doubtless be more or less embarrassed and most of them will for some time to come find abundant use for all their spare capital at home. The South must necessarily feel the loss and will more than ever appreciate the good work which Baltimore has done in developing her resources.

But there is a bright side. Baltimore will need Southern lumber and Southern iron in rebuilding and the Southern people, on their part, will do all in their power to aid Baltimore to repair her loss. There are occasions when sentiment does enter into business, and this is one of them. Baltimore will find that the words of tender sympathy which have been so generously said in all sections are not the mere expression of a passing emotion, but are prophetic of substantial help. In a few years Baltimore will be greater and richer than ever, and the calamity of 1904 will have been forgotten. Look at Galveston, Charleston and Jacksonville. There are few signs in any of them of recent disasters, except that the new buildings are much finer than those which were destroyed.

Government and Road-Making.

A friend of unusual attainments was quite severe on our Democracy a few days ago because we reproduced an editorial from the Index-Appel advocating an appropriation by the Federal government for the improvement of public roads. If our friend were the dictator of the party and could define its position, we would squirm considerably under his reproach, but when we have Bryan, Cleveland, Gorman and others each hurling that the party must pursue courses diametrically opposed to each other, then we do not take his censure so much to heart, but suggest that as a winning card let good roads be made the paramount issue of the Democratic party, and demand that an appropriation of \$100,000,000 be made for the improvement of the roads. It is not inconsistent with the well recognized policy of government at least to assist in building public roads. It is not proposed that the government shall actually undertake on its own account to construct roads, but that it shall appropriate so much money for the purpose, appropriating to each State its pro rata share and allowing each State

to expend the money on its own account.

For many years the South has been paying into the Federal Treasury enormous sums of money on the pension account, and very little of this money has come back to us. The fair-minded people of the North recognize this injustice, and at the Educational Conference at Athens, Ga., two years ago, a distinguished editor of New York mentioned the fact and said that it was due to the South that some of this money should be returned for educational purposes. The South is undoubtedly entitled, so far as justice goes, to every dollar that the Federal government may decide to appropriate for her benefit.

But that is not the main question. Mr. Jefferson, the father of Democracy, was always opposed to centralization in whatever form it might appear, and always deplored the fact that the people were being drawn from the rural districts to the towns and cities. He did not believe in the upbuilding of great cities at the expense of the rural districts, holding that cities were demoralizing to the people, while country life promoted health and happiness, good morals and Democracy. He believed that the ends of Democracy would be served and the human race benefited, the more evenly the people were distributed throughout the land.

But in spite of Mr. Jefferson's theory, steam and electricity have had the effect to mass the people in the cities to the detriment of the rural districts. Steam and electricity have proven to be the greatest centralizing forces of the age. Our cities have grown enormously and have improved accordingly, but it must be confessed that this growth and this improvement have been largely at the expense of the rural districts. The people have left the country and flocked to the cities.

The great problem, therefore, is what means can be employed to decentralize the population, to draw the surplus population from the cities and locate it in the country. The electric lines have done something in this direction, and are destined to do much more. Since their advent, there has been a notable increase in the suburban population of the cities, and the more these lines are extended, the greater the tendency to move away from the congested sections of the cities and locate in the broad areas of the suburbs.

But these electric lines necessarily have their limitations. They are doing good work as far as they go. But they are by no means a sufficient offset to the steam roads, which tend, as we have said, to centralize the population. The problem of decentralization of population is to be solved, if solved at all, by the construction of first-class macadamized roads throughout the length and breadth of the land. If Virginia, for example, were threaded with such roads, her lands would rapidly be taken up, the population would be more evenly distributed, and all the rural districts of the Commonwealth would take on new life.

It is not necessary to argue that from every point of view, and, notably, from a Democratic point of view, as held by Mr. Jefferson, such a consummation were devoutly to be wished. Therefore, road building is a matter of government concern, and should be the work of government, local, State and national.

John Brown Again.

At a Y. M. C. A. meeting held in Lafayette Theatre, Washington, on Sunday, Dr. Cortland Myers, of Brooklyn, eulogized old John Brown, whereupon some eight or ten persons quietly left the room, being unwilling to listen any longer to the preacher's absurd remarks on that subject.

"There was a farmer's boy up in New England," said Dr. Myers, "who saw it his duty to break the shackles off the neck of the oppressed man, and he said: 'I will do it.' He grew to be a man and a farmer, and he said: 'I will do it.' He became a wool grower, and he said: 'I will do it.' He went out to Missouri, but he still remembered his duty as he saw it, and he said: 'I will do it.'"

"He went back to New England, and still had his determination strong within him. Then he went down to Virginia and fired off his old musket. They took him out to the gallows where he was to be hung."

Here the preacher gave a sketch of the old negro woman who blessed John Brown as he went to the gallows, and mentioned the episode of the condemned man kissing the little negro boy.

"But," he continued, "they swung him up and out into eternity. This man, my friends, was John Brown."

"Here," we are told by the newspaper reporter, "the speaker was greeted by considerable applause." The accuracy of Dr. Myers's information and the reliability of his judgment may be estimated from the fact that he gives credence to that old, improbable and long ago exploded story about Brown, while on his way to the gallows, thrusting his head out of the "carriage window" and kissing a negro baby.

A Washington paper describes Dr. Myers as "a noted Brooklyn divine." Noted he may be, in a way, but he would do well to study the life of John Brown better than he has done—that is, if he purposes continuing his lectures on that subject. If he will do so, he will discover that Brown had in his composition little of the Christian martyr and much of the cruel and vengeful fanatic.

An Accident and a Warning.

The street car accident in this city on Saturday last, which came near costing the lives of two persons, calls attention to one of the most dangerous contingencies of the street car service. The car upon which these persons were riding had stopped for them to alight, and a car was approaching on the opposite track. The approaching car came up just as the passengers were moving out and was not observed by them. They passed behind the car which they had just left, and were struck by the approaching car.

The wonder is that more accidents of this character have not occurred, and

there would have been more such accidents if conductors had exercised less care. Time and again we have heard them warn passengers to look out for the approaching cars; but this cannot always be done, and there is danger many times a day from such accidents.

Some measure should be adopted to reduce this danger to the minimum, but street car experts say that there are fewer accidents where passengers are made to look out for themselves. At any rate this accident should make all passengers more careful. No person should pass around a car to the other track, unless he is sure that no other car, or vehicle of any kind, is approaching.

Hearst's Boom.

The Chicago Tribune says that the recent meeting of the Democratic State Committee of Illinois in that city was far from being a love feast. There were two factions present, the one headed by Mr. James H. Eckels, representing the gold-wing of the party, and the other headed by representatives of William R. Hearst. Mr. Eckels made a speech in which he gave warning that if the Democrats expected to win they must not appeal to the elements of discontent, to disturbers of the peace, nor to the elements that have never been Democratic. "Do you want to win," he asked, "How can you win? Not by writing a platform for Populists and Socialists. It will be a Democratic platform that no Populist will touch and that no Socialist will love."

Congressman James R. Williams, who has been brought forward by some of the Democrats of Illinois for the presidency, was present and spoke somewhat in the same line.

But the representatives of Mr. Hearst were violently opposed to the Williams side, and the Tribune says that they were in control of the meeting. It says also that a large majority of the spectators were Hearst supporters. The Hearst men expressed themselves as being elated at the result, and said that the Hearst boom had been greatly promoted by the meeting.

Until recently we had never thought of Mr. Hearst as a factor in the campaign, but it becomes daily more apparent that he has a considerable following in various parts of the country, and if he continues to gain strength he will have to be reckoned with when the convention meets. There is good reason to believe that Mr. William J. Bryan is even now working for Hearst, and that he will do everything in his power to promote Hearst's nomination.

A Farmers' Trust.

The representatives of all the co-operative agricultural interests of the Mississippi Valley will meet in Omaha on March 1st to organize a national farmers' exchange, with a capital stock of \$50,000,000.

In the call for the meeting it is recommended that the farmers concentrate their efforts, first, on grain; second, on stock; third, on cold storage; fourth, on lumber and coal; fifth on beef and pork packing and milling.

"We recommend," the call proceeds, "that branch offices be established and elevators and warehouses be built or bought all through the grain belt from Oklahoma to North Dakota, and from California east to the Alleghany Mountains, and we have arranged a plan of organization to reach every school district in the territory designated, and will put organizers trained in this special work in the field, if application is made to H. W. Galusha, of Topeka. We recommend that farmers store their grain in their own warehouses or cribs, and sell it gradually, instead of rushing it to market."

The Farmers' Co-operative and Shipping Association, which furnishes the basis for this organization, opened its first elevator on July 8, 1903. It now has thirty-five shipping points, including twenty elevators in Kansas, Oklahoma and Nebraska. It is the idea to establish terminal facilities at Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha and other necessary points.

This and the Danville meeting looks like the farmers are at least getting together.

The Farmers Organize.

There will be a great gathering of farmers in the city of Danville to-day, the object of which is to form a county organization to secure the co-operation of all the farmers' clubs in the county of Pittsylvania in an effort to better the condition of the planter.

There have been many farmers' organizations in Virginia, but they have accomplished very little because they were organized on the wrong principle. The Farmers' Alliance had for its object the control of legislation, and finally drifted into politics and went to pieces. But farmers' clubs, organized upon the right principle, upon good, sound, business principles, ought to be able to accomplish much for agriculture. Farmers in the tobacco belt have practically a monopoly of certain grades of tobacco, and have the situation largely in their own hands, if they will only co-operate and take advantage of their opportunities. We shall watch the movement now inaugurated in Danville with keen interest, and we sincerely hope that it will result in great benefit to the farmers.

Our Distinguished Guest.

Mme. Adelina Patti and her company will arrive in Richmond this evening from Atlanta, and will remain here until after the concert on Thursday evening. The distinguished singer, having a few days' leisure at her disposal, will pay Richmond the compliment to spend them here, and we hope that she will enjoy her stay with us. She was in Richmond last on April 27, 1892, and was so much pleased with the city that she wishes to remain here on this visit as long as possible. She is still a great singer, and lovers of music in this community will give her a cordial reception. The concert will be a social event, as well as a musical event, and the audience will be one of the most brilliant.

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lant that has ever gathered at the Academy of Music.

The gypsy is persona non grata to Virginia legislators. Steps have been taken to make him avoid this State in his future itineraries. On occasions, in these parts, he has been a picturesque feature of the landscape for to these many years.

There is a spot on the Brook road, a few miles from Richmond, where he has had his camp, from time to time, for a hundred years. This would indicate that he has not been a very objectionable character, else he would not have been permitted to pay his annual visits. However, not all the "fortunes" that his women folk have told have come true. If they were called to account in that business and make to refund for all their failures great would be their discomfiture.

The loss of business situations—the loss of other employment—the hunger and suffering consequent upon the destruction of so many factories and stores in Baltimore, are among the calamities consequences of the great fire in that city. There is no help for it; the poor will feel the effects of the disaster for a long time to come.

May the work of rebuilding soon commence and give employment to great numbers; meanwhile may the well-to-do people the world over open their purses gladly and widely, and send food to the hungry and fuel and clothing to those who are exposed to the winter's cold.

Again a story comes from London to the effect that Confederate bonds are selling there at from \$2 to \$5 per \$100. It sounds very unlikely, but it may be so. There are many credulous people in this world. However, these bonds are not the only "undisputed" securities that have found purchasers of late. It is said that those who buy them hope and believe the United States government some day will scale them down and pay them.

Down here in the ex-Confederacy we permit ourselves to indulge no such expectation as that.

Mr. Daniel McCallum, a prominent leader of organized labor in Richmond, is again a candidate for the position of delegate to the International Typographical Union. The Times-Dispatch does not presume to interfere in matters of this sort, but we have known Mr. McCallum for years, and we take occasion to say that the Richmond union will make no mistake in sending him as their representative to the convention.

In the Russo-Japanese naval operations in the Yellow Sea we may hear a good deal said with respect to the practical operations of the wireless system.

Russia has adopted a combination of features which, originated with Ducretel and Popoff. Japan has experimented with the Marconi system, but her vessels are not equipped with it.

From the time the robins begin to mate until the cold blasts of next winter begin to drive them to their Southern preserves, Baltimore is going to be the liveliest city in this country in the matter of keeping folks at work and distributing money among them.

The Republican party of North Carolina, that is to say the Federal officeholders over there, have resolved that President Roosevelt is simply all right.

Fireproof buildings do mighty well and are real comfortable until they catch fire.

We move that the ground hog be given another chance.

There will be something doing in the Monumental City this summer. Such a building season as there will be, this century has not seen since 1871 when burned Chicago was rebuilt.

The Times-Dispatch Monday extra was enterprise; of course, it was, but what about those Baltimore papers that took their forces over to Washington and went right along printing the news.

It's dollars to doughnuts that before the ashes get cold somebody is going to declare that Baltimore will imitate old Phoenix.

And so Mr. Bryan is only trying to form a combine with Tom Johnson and Mr. Hearst of sufficient strength to overcome the influence in the convention of what he calls "the reorganization crowd." Well, what then?

And Houston, Texas, also had a fire that leveled a whole block. This is startling off to be a tough year on the insurance companies.

What about all those fireproof buildings in Baltimore? The question arises: Is there such thing as a real fireproof building?

The Baltimore newspapers seem to have suffered more than any other one line of business.

Half Hour With

Virginia Editors.

The Portsmouth Star says:

A witty contemporary remarked a few days ago that Mr. Bryan has evidently determined to throw all his influence to have a chance to get there in a more truth than in that assertion. By making the breach in his party, for which he and his ridiculous politics are responsible men Bryan is proving himself the best friend the Republican party ever had.

The Norfolk Landmark has commenced to perambulate on Sundays. Its latest is on usury and concludes thus:

Young man, keep out of the grip of the usurer! If you are going too fast, but have involved the land-gamble, you have a chance to stop on the brink of destruction and regain a place of safety; but if you add the demon of usury to that of speculation, you will enormously reduce the possibility of escape.

The Charlottesville Progress fires at Norfolk thus:

The friends of any candidate who takes no higher view of questions of political corruption and of criminal assaults upon the integrity of the State than their rival upon such candidates, either a knave or a hypocrite, and from all such every candidate for office may well pray to be delivered. The political situation in Norfolk county and Norfolk city should be judged solely on its merits.

The Norfolk Ledger makes this very fair proposition:

If Mr. Bryan will agree not to say anything else till next December we'll nominate him as one of the ten distinguished Americans who are to be selected to speak into the phonograph in order to have their voices preserved in the archives of Harvard University, the Congressional Library, and the National Museum, along with those of the most prominent men of the various countries of the world—we'll even agree to let his speech into the talking machine be his famous "crown of thorns and cross of gold" peroration.

The sarcastical Newport News Press says:

Since it is announced that Colonel J. Campbell Slep has decided to oppose the Jamestown Exposition, any curiosity that may be evinced by the public to learn the identity of Colonel Slep would be excusable.

North Carolina Sentiment.

The Greensboro Telegram thinks it sees a coming leader in the United States Senate. It says:

A few years from now the leader of the Democrats in the Senate may be Mr. Simmons instead of Mr. Gorman. Simmons is shown a politician by the Maryland senator and he has all the nerve and ambition necessary to pull him to the front.

The Winston-Salem Sentinel is ready to hear the cry of the war dogs. It says:

Now let war come. We are ready for action. The telegraph boy has a good pair of legs, the headline writer a good hundred point and pretty full fonts, our news editor has a most magnificent stretch of the imagination just ready, the newsboys are practicing on their larynxes, we have ordered a new shooting stick, and we are protected from all outside interference by having the office towel in easy reach.

The Wilmington Messenger says:

It might be a right difficult piece of business to advocate ratification of the canal treaty and at the same time abuse Mr. Roosevelt for negotiating that treaty, but some of the senators have entered in doing so. We believe it was the Durham Herald which said some Democrats wanted the canal, but wanted to be made with the President for giving it to us, or words to that effect.

After viewing the entire field the Durham Herald reaches this conclusion:

If the Republicans should take the advice of the Democrats they would nominate Mr. Roosevelt, and if the Democrats should take the advice of the Republicans they would nominate Mr. Bryan.

The Raleigh News-Observer says:

Of course it is a long stretch to vote public money to expositions, but after the manner of the Charleston Exposition, it does not lie in Senator Tillman's mouth to call it "stealing."

A Few Foreign Facts.

The Japanese cultivate chrysanthemums in 235 varieties of colors. Of these eighty-seven are white, sixty-three yellow, thirty-two purple, thirty-one pink, thirty red, twelve russet and fourteen mixed hues.

Liverpool has closed one-third of its saloons during the last ten years, and so decreased her police force in consequence as to have effected an economy of \$40,000 yearly.

The United States pays Brazil \$42,000,000 a year for coffee and \$15,000,000 for crude rubber. Java, with a climate and soil similar to these islands, produces the highest grade coffee in the world.

Not only is the British shoe made chiefly of American leather and by American machinery, but even the metal books and eyelets are practically all imported from the United States.

The only place where black diamonds are found is the Brazilian Province of Bahia. They are usually found in river beds and are brought up by divers. Others are obtained by tunneling mountains. The largest specimen ever secured was worth \$30,000.

Personal and General.

Thomas Peterson, the first colored man to vote in the United States under the amendments to the Federal Constitution, died at his home in Newark, N. J.

William J. Bryan has confirmed the report that he will erect in Salem, Ill., a library building of splendid size and pattern. It will be in memory of his father and mother.

Robert Ellin, who had an international reputation as a stone and wood carver, has just died in New York. He was looked upon by the order of the artistic stone carving business in the United States.

Dr. Herr, of Leipzig, Germany, is in Washington. He is in this country making a study of reform schools and reformatories. After a thorough study of American reform schools he will return to Europe and make a report to the government, using his observations as a basis for recommendations.

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MR. HOWARD HALL AND MISS ETHEL FULLER, In "The Man Who Dared," at the Bijou

One fool is as bad as the other.—Montgomery Advertiser.

Two of a kind, as it were.

A Kansas Republican paper has hoisted the ticket "Hanna and Roosevelt" at its editorial masthead. If we were Teddy we would resign, lick that editor, and appeal to the country.—Atlanta Constitution.

He would willingly do all except resign.

Virginia's last Legislature did not discharge its duty of restricting the changes in population shown by the census of 1900. This function is imposed upon Legislatures after each census by the national Constitution.—Norfolk Ledger.

If congressmen and would-be congressmen had let the Legislature alone this matter would have been settled and forgotten by now.

Supreme Court of Appeals.

The following were the proceedings of the supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia yesterday:

Collins vs. George. Argued by A. D. Chandler for appellant and William E. Ennis for appellee and submitted.

Southern Railway Company and others vs. Glenn's Administrator and others an Glenn's Administrator vs. Southern Railway Company and others. Argued by Henry V. Anderson and Charles Huddle and continued.

Next case to be called: Loyd vs. Loyd's Executor et al. No. 62 on argument docket.

A Land of Leaders.

North Carolina men lead wherever they go. In the Richmond College course of lectures Dr. J. Rufus Hines will lecture on Lincoln, Mr. with experiments, and Dr. William L. Foushee will lecture on Pompeii. Dr. Foushee spent last summer studying in Pompeii.—Raleigh News-Observer.

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